

SWEPT BY FIRE.

Partial Destruction of the Manufacturers Building.

The Casino and Peristyle at the World's Fair.

BURNS FOR SIX HOURS.

The Loss May Reach Millions of Dollars.

Chicago, Jan. 9.—The world's fair has come last night. A rushing volcano of flame, huge gothic architecture tumbling into chaos, bewildered mobs of people—all were there under a great starry sky of Italian clearness, with Lake Michigan's broad expanse a second Mediterranean.

Probably no more magnificent, yet terrifying spectacle has ever been witnessed this side of the Atlantic.

It was long after dark when belated people returning from work to their homes in the northern suburbs along the elevated road, familiar to hundreds of thousands of world's fair visitors noticed a constantly enlarging column of fire ascending skyward in the east.

"The world's fair is on fire," was the cry, and few indeed of the fatigued walkers from the trials windows alighted until the famous signal at the exposition grounds was reached. The last half mile of the journey is directly east to the fair, so all view of the blazing pleasure houses of the fair was shut off for a time completely.

Collapse of the Peristyle.

The fire had been burning less than an hour when a thunderous crash of falling timber and a tremor shot up from the crowd announcing the collapse of the Peristyle. A moment later another terrific yell from the crowd told that the Liberal Arts building had caught fire, and that the whole exposition was threatened. A dramatic incident marked the destruction of the Peristyle. One of the adhesives holding up a group of firemen fell with the column and one of the heroic fighters went down to death, while a number of others suffered injuries more or less severe. The sky was vivid brilliant at this time with falling sparks many of which fell away to the north, showering the roofs of the Art Palace, Women's Building and the various state structures with fire.

President Higginbotham talks. At midnight President Higginbotham said he had been in the burning building over two hours; that the roof had burned and fallen, but that fortunately none of the exhibits were in range of the falling embers. "I should say," said he, "that the loss by water would be much greater than by fire. The total loss to exhibits will be about \$200,000. Of course the loss is serious enough, but the fire is now fairly under control and there is no more fear. All told, the contents of the Liberal Arts building did not exceed \$100,000 in value. As to the Casino Peristyle and Music Hall, there is no loss. We should not regret their burning, as it is the cheapest way to renew them."

BLOW THE RUINS LOOK.

A scene of desolation after the fire in the Grounds. Chicago, Jan. 9.—Last night's fire in the World's fair grounds presented great changes in the appearance of Chicago's famous pleasure park. It was expected would be made by six months of building wrecking. To the gloomy sight of vacant buildings and almost desolate ground, the eyes were soon added the spectacle of smoking and blackened heaps of debris.

The Casino, where the grand opening was held, was completely destroyed. The lights of the building were gone, and the windows were broken. Hundreds of spectators hurried from the trains into the shattered Court of Honor. The roar and the conflagration came into full view.

Whirlwinds of blazing embers were being carried from the end of the Comet of Honor farthest from the Administration building high over the mammoth roof of the Liberal Arts building, the largest structure on earth. The great golden statue of the republic could be seen lifting her liberty cap defiantly almost through the clouds of smoke and flame.

Started in the Casino Building. The fire started in the Casino, just east of the Agricultural building and south of the Peristyle. The Casino was quickly devoured, and the flames surged north on top of the Peristyle, and dropping made a second line of fire along the base of the columns. The flames then sprang through the Music Hall, which corresponds at the north end of the Peristyle to the Casino at the south.

While the fire was burning there was one of the most singular and fascinating sights of the night. Along the top of the Peristyle were scores of statues. These spectacles for those people fortunate enough to be on the sidewalk just east of the Peristyle was that of a succession of gigantic human beings plunging one after another headlong into the waters of the lake below.

The origin of the fire is said to be revenge on the part of a couple of tramps. The solitary guard in the Music hall says that just before the flames broke out he kicked two wagons out of Music hall and told them to find quarters elsewhere. They left in the direction of the Casino and soon after the fire broke out, and soon everything on the grounds was terror and confusion.

About the Manufacturers building cords of policemen were stationed, and groups of blue coats guarded every entrance. But the eager crowds which thronged over the walls of the burning piles could not be stopped in their course and thousands gathered outside.

The fire boats and engines on the lake-side, however, threw the flames in the ashes of the Peristyle and in the lower galleries of the southeast side of the Liberal Arts building, and hopes were raised that the fire had been subdued. But shortly after 11 p.m. the flames got beyond control in the top promenade of the Arts building and the main aisle of the building was a mass of flames arising from the burning brands which came from above.

Three days ago the number of packages awaiting shipment in each building was: Manufacturers, 11,073; Midway Plaisance, 1,300; Fine Arts, 750; Woman's, 810; Horticulture, 1,000; Transportation, 600; Mining, 1,320; Electricity, 657; Agriculture, 1,400; and 1,420 scattered in other buildings, making a total of 16,667 packages. Less than 14,000 packages had been shipped away prior to December 20 last. Most of the goods remaining were foreign exhibits.

French Exhibit in Ruins.

About half a great iron arch gave

way directly above the French wares and falling heavily, buried them beneath the burning pile, and they were abandoned. Back of the French wares was the Japanese exhibition, and about it clattered a trolley of scared and frantic fugitives. This like many exhibits, has not been released from bond and the goods could not be taken from the building. The bulk of American exhibits had long ago been removed, but the formalities of the custom house had detained the goods of the foreigners.

The fire department fought with energy and skill, but the conditions were all against success. A heavy wind came over the lake, fanning fiery embers everywhere and fanning the flames into fury life with every moment. Huge billows of flames rolled northward over the great glass roof, being manfully combated by the men upon the roof, who were handicapped, however, by the lack of water. A heroic effort was made to get streams to the top of the building, for the only apparent salvation of the structure lay in getting men upon the promenade and pouring water into the fire below. But the water supply was inadequate. Time and again the streams failed.

Firemen Killed.

WILLIAM MACKENZIE, engineer, engine company No. 21, fell from ladder on Peristyle and mortally injured; died at Mercy hospital. Rescued.

Captain Frederick, steam truck company No. 10, fell from roof of Manufacturers building and mortally injured; died at Mercy hospital.

Engines, ladders, watchmen, in the French section, were severely injured, and some were seriously maimed.

Shortly after 1 o'clock, four firemen were caught beneath a crush of falling timber just outside the Manufacturers building. Streams of water were instantly poured upon the mass and soon the injured men were removed. Their names could not be ascertained by the chief, but it was said all of the men were unconscious when rescued and that two of them are fatally injured.

Heroic Work of the Firemen.

The climax of interest was reached after midnight, when a company of fifty men could be seen by the watchmen edging their way along the ridge of the roof.

A cry of horror went up as a large section of roof almost under the feet of the firemen gave way and fell with a crash. But the firemen did not flinch. Down through the rugged gap in the roof a rope was lowered, and with the attached hose the men began to draw up hand over hand the 300 feet of pitch straight while they were exposed to a stream upon the fire below. They were taking a fearful risk for the slender chance of getting a line of hose in operation from the roof and the crowds below as they recognized the bravery of the deed, seeing them to the main floor, and the injured man was removed to the service building and to the emergency hospital.

There it was found that he had been internally injured. His chest, too, was

injured and his condition was considered serious though the physician did not think that death would result.

Kennedy the rescuer, is the hero of the hour, but modest as he is dashing and evading congratulations as much as possible.

"Are you hurt?" Kennedy asked.

"No," replied Captain Geitz.

Then bracing himself Kennedy drew the captain up so that he could acquire a safe position. But Captain Geitz soon found that he did not have the use of his left leg. It had been broken by his fall, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Kennedy brought him safe to the balcony. He assisted him then to the main floor, and the injured man was removed to the service building and to the emergency hospital.

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